

"His Determination!"

Scripture: John 6:41-59

Text: John 6:51,

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh."

The determination of Jesus is very plainly evidenced in the portion of scripture that we read this evening. What Jesus is really doing is simply expanding upon what he said in the portion of scripture that we read last night. John points out that there are some Jews in opposition in this crowd and they want to question Jesus on His statements.

First they question the validity of His statement that He has come down from heaven. They argue that after all, "did we not know your father Joseph and your mother Mary? How can you say that you have come down from heaven?"

But then Jesus gives them a statement ~~that~~ they cannot comprehend. We would say that he threw them a curve. He says, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh." And again they question His meaning and purpose. But this questioning and arguing never has stopped from that day to this. If we read this verse as many others in the church have done we can readily see that this verse could lead to a great controversy. And it has done just that. It is from this verse that the Roman Catholic Church, and the Lutheran Church as founded by Martin Luther, holds the belief that during the ^{consecration} ~~institution~~ of the elements, at some unknown point, the bread and the wine miraculously turn into the real flesh and blood of Christ. Ulrich Zwingli one of the founders of the Reformed church disagreed with Luther on this one point and therefore founded the Reformed church apart from the Lutheran Church.

It was from this verse and from the sedretness of the warly Christian

Church worship service that the pagans believed the Christians indulged in cannibalism, and were thus persecuted.

But what Jesus was saying, was really being spoken metamorphically and not literally. He was really saying that here was the real meaning of ~~the~~ discipleship, and the secret of Christian faith and living. When He said he was the vine, we do not think that he literally is a vine growing up the side of a tree ^{OR A BLOSSOM.} We understand that he was speaking metaphorically, and when he uses one metaphor and we accept it as such, we should accept all metaphors in the same way. To say that we must feed on Christ is ~~not~~ to mean that we must actually eat his body or drink his blood, but it means to absorb his teachings, to take his life inside ~~ours~~ ours.

William Barclay compares it to a volume sitting on a shelf. Perhaps that volume may be a book by William Shakespeare. As long as the book sits on the shelf unread, it remains outside of us and is therefore external. But when the volume is taken from the shelf and read, and digested so to speak, it becomes a part of us, it is in our minds and on our hearts and is no longer outside of us. When Jesus told us to abide in Him and he would abide in us, or to eat his flesh and drink his blood, he was saying to feed our hearts and our souls and our minds on him. He was telling us to live our lives in his words, and to live and relive his deeds in everything that we do until we become drenched and permeated and ~~saturated~~ saturated and filled with Him, and the life of God.

Thus we can see from this His Determination to not only live just exactly as His Father wanted Him to live, but to have us completely filled and full of that same spirit that comes from God. He was saying that if ~~WE~~ WE were to have this same determination in our lives, we could live for God just as He.

Thus we ^{should} come to the Lord's table with a strong determination to partake figuratively and metaphorically of the body and blood of Christ,

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA
MAUNDY THURSDAY APRIL 11, 1974

REV. RALPH C. LINK, PASTOR
MRS. VELMA COLLINS, ORGANIST
MR. RALPH COOPER, CHOIR DIRECTOR
CHRIS CAMPBELL, GREG BOSKO - ACOLYTES

HOLY COMMUNION - 7:30 P.M.

PRELUDE MUSIC: "ANDANTE E. MAESTOSO" TSCHAIKOWSKI
"CALVARY" RICHOLSON

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN No. 336 "LET ALL MORTAL FLESH
KEEP SILENCE"

*INVOCATION AND PRAYERS

SCRIPTURE LESSON: JOHN 6:41-59

*GLORIA PATRI

*EVENING PRAYER AND CHORAL RESPONSE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY "THE SUFFERING SAVIOR" WILSON

ANTHEM: "O SACRED HEAD, NOW WOUNDED" HASSLER

CHANCEL CHOIR AND MARILYN STEPHENSON ON FLUTE

SERMON: "HIS DETERMINATION"

COMMUNION HYMN No. 341 "HERE, O MY LORD"

*COMMUNION SERVICE - PAGE 32

EXHORTATION - CONFESSION - ABSOLUTION

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

SERAPHIC HYMN

THE INSTITUTION - CHORAL AMEN

AGNUS DEI

HOLY COMMUNION (PLEASE RETAIN ELEMENTS AND COMMUNE
WITH PASTOR)

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING - DOXOLOGY

*HYMN OF DEDICATION No. 343 "A PARTING HYMN WE SING"

*BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE

ORGAN POSTLUDE: "RECESSIONAL" VAN WOERT

----- *CONGREGATION STANDING -----

OUR SANCTUARY WILL BE OPEN FROM 7-9 P.M.
TOMORROW EVENING, GOOD FRIDAY, FOR THOSE WHO DESIRE
TO ENTER, MEDITATE, OR PRAY. THERE WILL BE NO FORMAL
SERVICE.

WE INVITE ALL CHRISTIANS, REGARDLESS OF DENOMIN-
ATION TO PARTAKE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER WITH US.

PLEASE FILL OUT A COMMUNION CARD SO THAT OUR
CHURCH'S RECORD WILL BE ACCURATE. IF VISITORS DESIRE
TO RECEIVE CREDIT AT THEIR HOME CHURCH, PUT THE NAME
AND ADDRESS OF EITHER YOUR PASTOR OR YOUR CHURCH ON
THE BACK OF THE CARD AND IT WILL BE FORWARDED.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION WILL BE CELEBRATED
THIS COMING EASTER SUNDAY, AT 8:00 A.M. (ALTAR) AND
AT 11:00 A.M. (PEW).

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN IN THE RECEPTION FOR
NEW MEMBERS - IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE SERVICE THIS
EVENING IN THE UNDERCROFT. THE CONGREGATION AND
FRIENDS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THIS FELLOWSHIP HOUR.

THE ELDERS AND DEACONS WILL ALSO SERVE AS USHERS.

TOMORROW - GOOD FRIDAY - A BREAKFAST FOR THE
YOUTH - WILL BE FROM 8-10 AT LUTHER HALL, NEXT TO
THE LIBRARY ON MCKEAN ST.

Shirley & Ralph Charles Link, Nancy Link, Dale with Lianne his wife, Lloyd Link with Karen his wife
Jessica in front of Ralph C. Link
Ethan and Alisha in front of R. Dale and Lianne Link (the eldest son & family)









Ralph C. Link
153 Keck Road
Sarver, Pa. 16055
(412) 352-1103

Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Married: December 15, 1951
Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill
Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

SCHOOLING:

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

PASTORATES:

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United
Church of Christ

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him. A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.